

30th Annual Wildflower Weekend: May 7-8, 2016

Program Schedule

Saturday, May 7

Spring Birds of Pocosin

9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Look and listen for cerulean warblers, scarlet tanagers and other spring migrants that may be flitting near the spring and surrounding woods. Easy ½-1-mile stroll. Bring binoculars. Meet at Pocosin Cabin parking (*unmarked*, mile 59.5). *Limited parking.*

Alan Williams, Park Ecologist

Wilderness Ramble

9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Meet a variety of wildflowers along the Skyland-Big Meadows Horse Trail on the only guided hike that will take you into designated wilderness this weekend. 2 miles. Elevation change: about 300 ft. Meet at Fishers Gap Overlook (mile 49.3).

Mara Meisel, Park Ranger

Hike to the Highest Peak (repeats on Sunday)

*9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

See what's blooming and learn about high-elevation rock outcrops as you hike to the park's highest peak, Hawksbill Mountain, and a magnificent view of the Shenandoah Valley. 3 miles. Elevation change: about 685 ft. Meet at Hawksbill Gap parking (mile 45.6).

Jack Price, Guest Naturalist

Wonders of the Mill Prong (repeats on Sunday with different leader)

9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Look for trillium, jack-in-the-pulpit and more along this trail that never fails to delight wildflower lovers. 2 miles. Elevation change: about 400 ft. Meet at Milam Gap parking (mile 52.4).

Tom Dierauf, Guest Naturalist

Featured Program

"Wild About Shenandoah, From Wildflowers to Wildlife"

9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

See how plants and animals depend on each other in amazing ways in the habitats protected by the park. Half-hour PowerPoint program followed by a walk outside. ½ mile. Meet at Byrd Visitor Center auditorium (mile 51). Book signing opportunity beforehand.

Ann and Rob Simpson, Naturalists and Authors

***A Change of Habitat**

10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Showy, rare and interesting plants inhabit special places in the park. See what beauties can be found on this visual tour of forest, meadow, rock outcrop and edge environments. PowerPoint program. Byrd Visitor Center auditorium (mile 51).

Wendy Cass, Park Botanist

"Youth Art in the Park" Contest Recognition Ceremony

Noon to 12:30 p.m.

Join us to congratulate the winning artists in the park's 2nd annual wildflower art contest. Byrd Visitor Center auditorium (mile 51).

Featured program

***Botanical Art Workshop** (repeats on Sunday)

1:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Were you ever tempted to pick a wildflower and take it home, but you knew you shouldn't? Here's a chance to "keep" the flower, document the day and enjoy your experience in a way that conserves wildflowers and encourages creativity. Learn a few botany basics, pick up tips on observation and composition, then sketch and use watercolors to paint what you see. No art or science background is necessary ~ just come and have fun! Meet at Byrd Visitor Center auditorium (mile 51). After introduction and practice session, take a walk outdoors to try out your new skills. Rain or shine. Wear walking shoes and long pants. Be prepared to sit on the ground, or bring a small folding stool or chair. All art supplies will be provided.

Betty Gatewood, Artist

Splendid South River Falls Trail

1:30 to 5:00 p.m.

Early saxifrage, rue anemone and more flowers greet hikers on this trail to a viewpoint overlooking an 83-ft. waterfall. Strenuous 3.3 miles. Elevation change: about 900 ft. Meet at trailhead in South River picnic area (mile 62.5).

Bob Pickett, Guest Naturalist

***Passamaquoddy Loop Hike**

1:30 to 5:00 p.m.

Discover what's blooming on the rocky Passamaquoddy Trail to Little Stony Man Cliffs, returning via the Appalachian Trail. Great valley views. *Hike does not include the summit of Stony Man Mountain.* 2.8 miles. Elevation change: about 560 ft. Meet at Stony Man Nature Trail parking (mile 41.7, north entrance of Skyland Resort).

Mara Meisel, Park Ranger

Franklin Cliffs Stroll

2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

See an amazing variety of wildflowers just a few steps from your car. ½ mi. Meet at Franklin Cliffs Overlook (mile 49).

Ann and Rob Simpson, Guest Naturalists

Sunday, May 8

***Hike to the Highest Peak** (repeat)

9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. See description of Saturday hike.

Jack Price, Guest Naturalist

Wonders of the Mill Prong (repeat)

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. See description of Saturday hike.

Kristin Zimet, Guest Naturalist

Bearfence Mountain Hike

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Vernal irises and birdfoot violets are among the unusual flowers we hope to find on this hike to a 180-degree view. 1.5 miles. Elevation change: about 300 ft. *Hike does not include Bearfence Rock Scramble.* Meet at Meadows School Fire Road parking (mile 56.8, west side of Skyline Drive). *Limited parking.*

Mara Meisel, Park Ranger

***Map Invasive Plants With an App!**

10:00 a.m. to Noon

Use your own cell phone to help the park manage invasive plants without having to pull any weeds! This hike will introduce free cell phone applications for mapping invasive plants, including basic mapping techniques and identification of common invasives. No experience necessary, but **participants should register as EDDMaps users**(free at eddmappings.org) **and come with an iPhone or Android loaded with the Mid-Atlantic Early Detection Network (MAEDN) app** (freely available at <http://www.eddmappings.org/midatlantic/>) 2-miles. Elevation change: about 455 ft. Meet at north end of Loft Mountain Wayside parking (mile 79.5).

Jake Hughes, Biological Technician, Shenandoah National Park

Birds and Blooms of the Limberlost

10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Discover what's coming back or starting fresh in this newly emerging forest that was significantly altered by insect infestation and extreme weather. Very slow, gentle 1 mile. Meet at Limberlost parking (mile 43). *Limited parking.*

Ann and Rob Simpson, Guest Naturalists

Stony Man "Rocks"

1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Learn about high-elevation rock outcrop habitats and look for unusual plants as you hike to the summit of Stony Man Mountain (elev. 4,010 ft.). 1.6 miles. Elevation change: about 340 ft. Meet at Stony Man Nature Trail parking (mile 41.7, north entrance of Skyland Resort).

Cathy Mayes and Adele Baker, Guest Naturalists

Featured program

***Botanical Art Workshop (repeat)**

1:30 to 4:00 p.m. See description of Saturday program.

Betty Gatewood, Artist

***Snead Farm Loop Hike**

1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

See what wildflowers await on this hike through a former apple orchard, farm, home site and the only remaining barn in the park. There may be some surprises! 2.6 miles. Elevation change: about 490 ft. Meet at Dickey Ridge picnic area (mile 4.7).

Richard Stromberg, Guest Naturalist

Appalachian Trail Beauties

2:00 to 4:30 p.m.

This gentle section of the A.T. hosts a tremendous diversity of native woodland flowers. 1.5 miles. Elevation change: about 185 ft. Meet at Lewis Mountain picnic area (mile 57.2).

Mara Meisel, Park Ranger

***Denotes new program this year**

Reminders

- Wear sturdy shoes and bring water on all hikes.
- Evaluate your personal fitness and health to choose an appropriate program.
- Please don't bring pets on programs. Service animals welcome.
- Come prepared for wet weather. Walks may be conducted in light rain, but will be canceled in case of thunderstorms.
- Length of trail listed is for entire hike. Elevation changes of less than 70 feet are not included.
- Learn more about Shenandoah's wildflowers at the park's website: www.nps.gov/shen

More than 850 species of flowering plants grow in Shenandoah National Park. About 70% of them are native. Many native woodland wildflowers thrive in the dappled forest sunlight of springtime. They race to bloom and attract pollinators before overhead trees become fully leafed out and shade engulfs them. Hot summer sunshine is too strong for them. Now is their time.

Please help to ensure that wildflowers will be around for generations by leaving them unharmed. A flower that is picked misses the chance to spread thousands of seeds. A plant that is dug up is gone forever, and the loss affects all things connected to it. If you love them, leave them.

Meet Our Guest Naturalists and Program Leaders

Adele Baker monitors the rock outcrop and its indigenous rare plants on Stony Man summit as a volunteer with Shenandoah's Adopt-an-Outcrop program. She is a past board member of Old Rag Master Naturalists, the Virginia Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation, and the Shenandoah National Park Association.

Tom Dierauf is a retired forester with the Virginia Department of Forestry, and served on the advisory board of the Flora of Virginia project. He has enjoyed hiking, backcountry camping, fishing and discovering wildflowers in Shenandoah for more than 40 years.

Betty Gatewood is a watercolor artist and a keen observer of nature. She has provided cover art for "Virginia's Mountain Treasures" published by The Wilderness Society, and for the Virginia Native Plant Society's "Wildflower of the Year" brochures. She has exhibited art and illustrated journals at Staunton Public Library, and botanical art at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond. One of her botanical watercolors was selected for the current "Flora of the National Parks" exhibit at the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C. She is a Virginia Master Naturalist.

Catherine Mayes is treasurer of the Virginia Native Plant Society, immediate past president of Old Rag Master Naturalists, and president of the Virginia Chapter of The American Chestnut

Foundation. She helps protect the fragile ecosystem on Stony Man summit as a volunteer with Shenandoah's Adopt-an-Outcrop program.

Bob Pickett retired from the U.S. Naval Academy as supervisor of the gardeners and greenhouses. He has led numerous hikes for the Virginia and Maryland Native Plant societies and Audubon Naturalist Society. He was the first naturalist for the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, of which he's been a member since 1984, leading hikes, writing articles, and maintaining trails and cabins.

Jack Price is a Virginia Master Naturalist, Virginia Master Gardener, and Virginia wildlife habitat facilitator. He serves on the board of directors of the Shenandoah National Park Association, and is on the steering committee for the Virginia Master Naturalist program. He was named the Culpeper Soil & Water Conservation District "Conservation Educator of the Year" for 2012.

Ann and Rob Simpson are naturalists who teach at Lord Fairfax Community College. Ann is program leader for the science department, teaching general biology, anatomy and physiology, and nature photography. Rob is professor of natural resources, teaches general and field biology, and is program head of the nature and outdoor photography curriculum. Their most recent book is the *Nature Guide to Shenandoah National Park* (2013).

Richard Stromberg is a Virginia Master Naturalist and hike leader, trail maintainer, and rare plant monitor for the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. He is a board member of the Piedmont Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, and past president of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter of the Master Gardeners Association.

Kristin Zimet worked as a nature guide for Clarke County Parks and Recreation and Smithsonian Journeys. She is a docent for The Nature Conservancy at Ice Mountain Preserve, WV, and for the State Arboretum of Virginia. She is a Virginia Master Naturalist and board member of the Virginia Native Plant Society's Piedmont chapter.